

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

Report contains agricultural news items of interest for Italy, the EU and the world for the month of October 2011.

General Information:

Italy's Top Chef Teaming Up with McDonald's

Gualtiero Marchesi, Italy's most famous chef, is working with McDonald's Italia to create two hamburgers and a dessert especially designed for the Italian menu. This "special menu" will only be available until November 15. The "Vivace" (vivacious) is a burger topped with bacon, salted spinach, marinated onions, mayonnaise and mustard seeds. The "Adagio" (slowly like the musical term) is also a hamburger, topped with sweet-and-sour eggplant strips, sliced tomatoes and salted ricotta, in a bun covered in sliced almonds. Both sandwiches cost € 4.70. The dessert, called "Tiramisu alla Milanese," combines a piece of sweetbread, known as panettone, a coffee-flavored cream, mascarpone and candied almonds, and sells for €2.50. Roberto Masi, CEO of McDonald's Italia, said the partnership with Marchesi "is taking McDonald's to a new level."

ANSA Newswire service

FEATURE ARTICLE

Clinton Urges Sharper Focus on Women in Global Agriculture

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says that while it is important to respond to urgent food crises, it is imperative that the international community stay focused on the long-term goal of strengthening global agriculture to reduce hunger and malnutrition. "The United Nations estimates that we need to increase global food production by 70 percent by the year 2050 in order to meet growing demand," Clinton said at a forum on women and agriculture in New York. One way of addressing that need is by investing more in women, who make up the majority of the agricultural workforce in many developing nations, Clinton said. Women are involved in every aspect of food production, from planting seeds to weeding fields to harvesting crops, but women farmers are 30 percent less productive than male farmers because they have access to fewer resources. "These women have less fertilizer, fewer tools, poorer quality seeds, less access to training and the ownership of land," Clinton said. The consequence is that women farmers grow fewer crops, which means less food is available at markets and more people go hungry, Clinton said. "The production gap between men and women farmers disappears when that resource gap is closed," she said. "If all farmers, men and women, had access to the same resources, we could increase agricultural output by 20 to 30 percent. That would feed an additional 150 million people every year."

Clinton said that is why the United States has focused on women farmers in its Feed the Future initiative, a crucial centerpiece of American foreign policy in the Obama administration. The United States is allocating \$5 million this year for a new gender-equality program within Feed the Future. "This money will be used to fund innovative approaches to promoting gender equality in agriculture and land use and to integrate gender effectively into agricultural development and food security programs," Clinton said. A significant part of this effort will be devoted to research about women farmers, who, Clinton said, are an untapped resource that not enough is known about. The research

will focus on obstacles facing women farmers worldwide and what can be done to remove them or at least reduce the obstacles, she said.

State Department website

THE EUROPEAN UNION

U.S. Cheese Producer Calls for Overhaul of GI Rules

A U.S. cheese producer is challenging the EU Geographical Indications (GIs) system by suggesting the creation of a new system whereby geographic names are added to the cheese name. Enrico Auricchio has built a successful business in the U.S. producing Gorgonzola and Parmesan cheese following original Italian recipes. However, he is unable to export some of his products to the European market because these cheeses are protected under the GI system.

Geographical indications (GIs) are indications that identify a good as originating from a certain place, where a given attribute, reputation, or other characteristic of that good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin. Examples of GIs include Florida oranges, New Zealand lamb, and Parma ham. Although frequently applied to foods items, GIs may be associated with any product (e.g. Swiss watches). GIs act like trademarks. Once established they confer certain exclusive rights to the owner. Producers use GIs to create market recognition, hopefully at a premium price. Although GIs may benefit from a certain reputation or characteristic, their quality – that is, their wholesomeness, healthiness, safety – is not guaranteed above the minimal level guaranteed for all similar food items. The perceived “quality” of GIs is thus a matter of taste and marketing. For example, Grana Padano producers claim that blind taste tests show there is no statistical taste/preference difference between their product and Parmigiano Reggiano, even though the latter costs several Euros more per kilo. Not all GIs win international taste competitions. The United States and the European Union (EU) protect GIs in different ways. The United States protects GIs as part of its patent and trademark laws. However, in 1992, the EU developed a new system to provide protection throughout the EU for the geographical indications and designations of origin of certain agricultural products and foodstuffs. In 1999, the United States challenged the EU’s GI regulation in the WTO on two grounds: discrimination against U.S. GIs and failure to protect U.S. trademarks. In March 2005, the WTO panel ruled that certain aspects of the EU GI regulation were inconsistent with WTO rules and set a deadline for the EU to modify its regulations.

For more information, see the USEU fact sheet on GIs:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/GI.html>.

Controversies occur when GIs protected in one area are considered to be generic in another. For example, cheddar is considered to be generic (mainly because the world consumes far more cheddar cheese than could be produced in Cheddar), while Italy argues vehemently that ‘parmesan’ (as well as Parmigiano Reggiano) are GIs. Controversy also occurs because many “GI” products were made well before they were registered under the EU scheme (which began only in 1992) by people who long ago moved from a particular geographical area to settle elsewhere, taking their traditional knowhow with them.

For previous Post reporting on GIs, please see GAIN IT1013.

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

31st World Food Day Tackles Food Prices Issue

Leaders from governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector met at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome to celebrate the 31st annual World Food Day. The participants acknowledged that while progress has been made against world hunger, challenges remain regarding people's access to adequate and nutritious food. This year's theme was *Food Prices-From Crisis to Stability*. FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf said that greater investment is the key to mitigating food price fluctuations. More than \$80 billion of additional investment is required annually in agriculture and related activities to ensure food supplies for the world in 2050.

"Ending world hunger is not just about hope, but also about hard work," said World Food Program Executive Director Josette Sheeran. "It's not only about compassion, but commitment. Ending hunger is not only about dreams, but about discipline."

FAO webpage

FAS Italy Regional REPORTING

IT1148 - Italy Annual Tree Nuts 2011

GR1111- Greece Canned Deciduous Fruit Annual 2011

HR1115 - Croatia Exporter Guide

HR1112 - Update - Croatia FAIRS (Food Agricultural Import Requirements) Report

BK1112 - Bosnia FAIRS (Food Agricultural Import Requirements) Report

Reports are available at: <http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx>

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